**LOS ANGELES COUNTY HOMELESS INITIATIVE**

**City Plan to Prevent and Combat Homelessness: A Guide**

As Measure H resources are deployed to reduce and prevent homelessness throughout Los Angeles County, each City in Los Angeles County can broaden the collective impact and accelerate change by undertaking a locally specific City Plan to Combat Homelessness. As your project team uses the provided template to develop your City Plan, this Guide is meant to frame the questions/prompts in the template, offer background information, direct you to useful resources, and situate your thinking in the broader context of the County’s response to homelessness. Please review each section of the Guide carefully as you work through the template.

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| **Planning Context**  **Framing Your City’s Interest in Developing and Implementing a Homelessness Plan** |

***Consider the following questions as you respond to Question #2 in the template. Use your answers to help you describe why your city is undertaking this process.***

1. What are the most significant issues related to homelessness that have an impact on your City?
2. What City Departments are most impacted by homelessness and how?
3. How are residents, businesses, community groups, and other stakeholders in your City affected by homelessness?
4. What City programs are currently available to serve the homeless?
5. Other than City programs, what homeless services are available in your City?
6. Which City policies have a direct or indirect effect on homelessness or people experiencing homelessness?
7. Which community stakeholders should be involved in collaboration with your City around homelessness?
8. Which City Departments that directly interact with homeless populations have a protocol for addressing their needs?
9. Does your City know how much it annually spends (first responders, shelters, other City services, etc.) in serving homeless residents (e.g. spending on police, paramedics, cleaning crews, libraries, transportation, shelters, homeless services, other City Services)?
10. How does your City work with the Coordinated Entry System (CES) in your region?
11. How does your City currently coordinate with regional partners to address homelessness? How can this coordination be enhanced?

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| **City Goals and Related Actions** |

Cities have opportunities to collaborate on many of the County Homeless Initiative strategies. The questions below help guide your planning for the areas where cities are best equipped to engage. They are organized by relevant County Homeless Initiative strategies and provide information about funding opportunities, as applicable.

***Consider these questions as you develop your goals (Question #4 in the template) and determine what actions you will take to achieve them through your City Homelessness Plan. Please see the appendix for more details on the strategies referenced below.***

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| 1. **PREVENT HOMELESSNESS** |

**Relevant County Homeless Initiative Strategies:**

* *A1/A5 Homeless Prevention Program for Families /Individuals*

**Questions to consider regarding homelessness prevention:**

1. How can your City identify families/individuals who are at risk of homelessness?
2. What organizations already serve families and individuals at risk of homelessness? What is the City’s relationship to these organizations?
3. Do City Departments currently link families to the Coordinated Entry System for Single Adults, Families, and Youth? If so, what steps do City Departments take to make these links? How can these methods be enhanced? If not, what are the available opportunities within the city to improve referral processes?
4. What resources does your City have that could be redirected for homeless prevention services for families and/or individuals?
5. What policies does your City have in place that could help to prevent homelessness? (e.g. anti-harassment strategies, legal services, eviction defense) What policies could your city adopt to prevent homelessness?
6. What City department(s) would be best suited to lead your City’s efforts around preventing homelessness for families and/or individuals?

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| 1. **SUBSIDIZE HOUSING** |

**Relevant County Homeless Initiative Strategies:**

* *B3 Partner with Cities to Expand Rapid Re-Housing*
* *B4 Facilitate Utilization of Federal Housing Subsidies*
* *B6 Family Reunification Housing Subsidies*
* *B7 Interim/Bridge Housing for those Exiting Institutions*
* *B8 Housing Choice Vouchers for Supportive Housing*

**Funding Opportunities:**

* B3 Rapid Re-Housing: Cities contribute $500 per month for up to 9 months of a rental subsidy for each family or individual and collaborates with the County in identifying families/individuals for enrollment in rapid rehousing. The County funds the remainder of the rental subsidy and the full cost of supportive services. The County covers all costs of the rental subsidy after 9 months.
* B4 Homeless Incentive Program: Cities with their own Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) can contract with HACoLA to implement the Homeless Incentive Program (HIP) and receive $3500 for each homeless family/individual who receives a federal housing subsidy for permanent supportive housing. These funds can be used for damage mitigation, vacancy payments to hold units, and security deposits.
* B7 Interim/Bridge Housing for those Exiting Institutions: Cities that develop shelters or have existing shelters can apply for funding under B7 to use all or a portion of beds for interim/bridge housing for people exiting jails, public and private hospitals, foster care, the probation system, and mental health facilities.

**Questions to consider regarding subsidized housing:**

1. In what ways is your City interested in pursuing the above funding opportunities?
2. What resources are available or could be redirected to maximize participation in any of the above opportunities?
3. What City Departments are best suited to lead efforts on rapid rehousing, Homeless Incentive Program and/or interim/bridge housing?
4. Does your City currently have protocols in place to refer homeless individuals, families, and youth to local rapid rehousing providers?
5. What could your City do to encourage landlords to provide housing opportunities to homeless residents, including those with housing vouchers?
6. What resources can/does your City provide to help people identify available rental units?
7. Does your City have its own PHA? If so, how many Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) become available each year through routine turn-over?
8. If your City has a PHA, does it currently prioritize homeless individuals, chronically homeless individuals, and/or families for PHA vouchers? If so, how? If not, how can your City make changes to its Administrative Plan to enable this prioritization?
9. If your City issues housing vouchers for homeless individuals, are they matched through CES? If not, how can the City coordinate with CES to enable this matching?
10. Under Strategy B6, the County provides subsidized time limited rapid-rehousing and case management services to families in the child welfare system. If your City issues housing vouchers, can you set aside vouchers for these families, who may need ongoing rental assistance?
11. Does your City operate jails and/or hospitals? If so, do these institutions refer clients to bridge housing?

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| 1. **INCREASE INCOME** |

**Relevant County Homeless Initiative Strategies include:**

* *C1 Enhance the CalWORKs Subsidized Employment Program for Homeless Families*
* *C2 Increase Employment for Homeless Adults by Supporting Social Enterprise*
* *C4/5/6 Countywide Supplemental Security/Social Security Disability Income and Veterans Benefits Advocacy*
* *C7 Subsidized Employment for Homeless Adults*

**Questions to consider regarding increasing income:**

1. What social enterprise/subsidized employment organizations are currently operating in your City?
2. How could your City work with the local Chamber of Commerce and business owners to increase employment opportunities for homeless/formerly homeless residents by:
   1. Partnering with social enterprise
   2. Becoming employment sites for subsidized employment through local workforce development and/or CalWORKs programs?
3. Would your City be interested in adopting a City policy or ordinance to provide increased employment opportunities by establishing a contracting/sub-contracting preference for social enterprise? A sub-contracting preference would extend the preference to bidders who agree to sub-contract a portion of the contract work to a social enterprise; this would greatly expand the range of City contracts in which a social enterprise could potentially participate. The County’s Ordinance establishing a contracting preference for social enterprises can be found at: <http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/105828.pdf>
4. What City Department would be best suited to lead your City’s efforts around increasing employment opportunities by supporting social enterprise and/or fostering development of subsidized employment opportunities?
5. What referral systems are in place to connect disabled, homeless City residents with the County’s disability benefits advocacy program for SSI, SSDI, and Veteran’s benefits? What referral systems can be established?

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| 1. **PROVIDE CASE MANAGEMENT AND SERVICES** |

**Relevant County Homeless Initiative Strategies include:**

* *D2 Expand Jail In-Reach*
* *D5 Support for Homeless Case Managers*
* *D6 Criminal Record Clearing Project*
* *D7 Provide Services for Permanent Supportive Housing*

**Funding Opportunity**

* D7 Provide Services for Permanent Supportive Housing: City PHAs can partner with the County Department of Health Services to connect voucher holders to Intensive Case Management Services (ICMS). Cities can enter into MOUs with the County, under which the County provides supportive services for any new unit of PSH created within the City.

**Questions to consider regarding case management and services:**

1. If your City operates a jail, how do you assist homeless inmates? For inmates whom the City transfers to a County jail, in what ways can inmates be flagged as candidates to be offered services through the Jail In-Reach program while in a County facility? What other referrals can be made? Is this Jail In-Reach program replicable in the City-operated facility?
2. Do City Departments or local agencies participate in regional case conferencing to coordinate care with other service providers? If not, how can Department staff be encouraged to participate?
3. Can your City host a Criminal Record Clearing Project clinic at a public facility? These clinics help individuals to clear tickets and citations and the associated fines or warrants, removing barriers to housing and employment. How can your City help market, encourage community support, and promote high attendance for this event?
4. If your City has a PHA, are voucher holders who need permanent supportive housing (PSH) connected with services? City PHAs can work with the County Department of Health Services to provide access to Intensive Case Management Services (ICMS).
5. What barriers exist within City permitting and zoning rules to siting PSH? What can the City do to remove these barriers?
6. What is your relationship with PSH developers and service providers in your City? How can the City offer additional support to tenants of existing PSH?
7. Is your City interested in establishing an MOU with the County, whereby for every new unit of PSH created in the City, the County will provide all supportive services? The LA County Board of Supervisors motion authorizing the MOUs and a template MOU can be found at: <http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/116267.pdf>
8. Under the MOU, new PSH could be established through construction, rehabilitation, and acquisition. In addition, Cities with PHA’s can designate housing vouchers for use in PSH to create new PSH slots. Is your City able to create PSH through any of these means?

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| 1. **CREATE A COORDINATED SYSTEM** |

**Relevant County Homeless Initiative Strategies include:**

* *E4 First Responders Training*
* *E5 Decriminalization Policy*
* *E6 Expand Countywide Outreach System*
* *E7 Strengthen the Coordinated Entry System*
* *E8 Enhance the Emergency Shelter System*
* *E10 Regional Coordination of Los Angeles County Housing Authorities*
* *E14 Enhance Services for Transition Age Youth*

**Funding Opportunity**

* E8 Enhance the Emergency Shelter System: Funding is available for acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of buildings for shelter facilities. The County can also fund and provide services onsite at City-run shelters.

**Questions to consider regarding creating a coordinated system:**

1. Does your City currently provide training for first responders regarding interaction with people who are mentally ill and/or homeless?
2. Which City first responders engage with homeless residents and what are the reasons that they engage?
3. What barriers have been identified by first responders in serving homeless City residents?
4. How do first responders currently address constituent concerns about encampments, homeless residents living in vehicles, and unsheltered homeless residents?
5. How does your city coordinate with homeless outreach teams? How could this coordination be strengthened?
6. Does your City currently have a policy regarding first responders interacting with homeless individuals that emphasizes connecting individuals to service providers rather than criminalizing them (i.e. a decriminalization policy)? If so, can this policy be enhanced?
7. How can your City coordinate referrals to the Countywide Outreach System?
8. How does your City coordinate with CES lead agencies in your Service Planning Area (SPA) (for Single Adults, Families, and Youth)? How can coordination be improved?
9. How can the City facilitate relationships between Housing Locators and property owners/landlords to increase the number of people who can make use of rental subsidies?
10. Are any emergency shelters located in your City? If the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for these shelter(s) does not currently permit 24/7 operations, how can your City facilitate modification of the CUP?
11. If your City has a jail, when homeless residents are released, what actions are currently taken to prevent their return to homelessness?
12. What are ways your City could partner with the County to enhance the Emergency Shelter System? (This may include increasing access to hotels and motels to act as interim emergency shelter.)
13. What City ordinances or policies could your City change to enhance shelter opportunities for homeless City residents?
14. If your City has a PHA, how could collaboration with other Public Housing Authorities in LA County maximize the effectiveness of your City’s Housing Authority in combating homelessness?
15. Is your Housing Authority participating in the regular quarterly Homeless Issues Roundtable convened by the Housing Authorities of the City and County of Los Angeles?
16. What services are currently available for homeless Transition Age Youth (TAY) in your City? What additional services are needed? How can you City help to make them available?

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| 1. **INCREASE AFFORDABLE/HOMELESS HOUSING** |

**Relevant County Homeless Initiative Strategies include:**

* *F1 Promote Regional SB 2 Compliance and Implementation*
* *F2 Linkage Fee Nexus Study*
* *F4 Development of Second Dwelling Units Program*
* *F5 Incentive Zoning/Value Capture Strategies*
* *F6 Using Public Land for Homeless Housing*
* *F7 Preserve and Promote the Development of Affordable Housing for Homeless Families and Individuals*
* *F7 Housing Innovation Fund (One-time)*

**Funding Opportunities**

* F7 Preserve and Promote the Development of Affordable Housing for Homeless Families and Individuals: Cities can apply for funding through the Notices of Funding Availability issued by the County’s Community Development Commission.
* F7 Housing Innovation Fund: Cities can apply for grant funding to develop homeless housing in creative ways that are expeditious and cost-effective. A solicitation for proposals is forthcoming in 2018.

**Questions to consider regarding increasing affordable/homeless housing:**

1. Is your City in compliance with SB 2? If not, what challenges (if any) have you encountered in complying with SB 2? (See SB 2 Best Practices Guide: <http://homeless.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Public-Counsel-SB-2-Best-Practices-Guide-FINAL.pdf>)
2. What opportunities do you see for your City to partner with the County to promote continued compliance with SB 2 or to implement the provisions of SB 2 in your City?
3. Which Department in your City has lead responsibility for the implementation of SB 2?
4. If your City is a Community Development Blog Grant (CDBG) entitlement jurisdiction, how does the City intend to use the FY 2019 funding that will be allocated through the Building Homes and Jobs Act (new SB 2 enacted in 2017) to support your homelessness plan?
5. Does your City have a housing impact fee or linkage fee program to support the production of affordable housing?
6. Has your City conducted a linkage fee study?
7. Does your City wish to pursue a nexus study as the required first step for eventual implementation of a linkage fee?
8. The recent passage of AB 1505 restores the ability of cities and counties to adopt inclusionary housing policies for rental units. The text of AB 1505 can be found here: <https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billPdf.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB1505&version=20170AB150593CHP>

* If your jurisdiction has an inclusionary ordinance that was created before 2009, what updates/amendments need to be made? Does the existing ordinance provide alternative means of compliance (i.e. in lieu fees, land dedication, etc.), as now required by State law?
* If your existing or planned inclusionary ordinance requires more than 15% of new rental units to be affordable, you may be asked to prepare an economic feasibility study for the California Department of Housing and Community Development. What City departments or partners can help with the completion of this study?
* What percentage of affordable units per development best addresses the needs of your community?
* What levels of affordability should be targeted to address the needs of your community?

1. Does your City have an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) ordinance in place? Is your ordinance in compliance with the changes in State law regarding ADUs which took effect on January 1, 2017, under AB 2299 and SB 1069? (See https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billPdf.xhtml?bill\_id=201520160AB2299&version=20150AB229994CHP and https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billPdf.xhtml?bill\_id=201520160SB1069&version=20150SB106990CHP ).
2. Could the development of ADUs increase the supply of affordable housing in your City?
3. What are the barriers (if any) to allowing/encouraging ADUs in your City?
4. Are there opportunities for your City to partner with the County to increase the development of accessory dwelling units in your City?
5. Does your City currently implement any incentive zoning/value capture strategies?
6. Would your City benefit from implementing any incentive zoning/value capture strategies?
7. Are there opportunities for your City to partner with the County to utilize Incentive Zoning/Value Capture strategies to preserve and or develop affordable/homeless housing?
8. Are there City-owned properties that could be used for the development of services or housing for people experiencing homelessness?
9. What steps is your City taking to help preserve affordable housing?
10. Does your City have any innovative ideas for the development of homeless housing in a cost-effective and expeditious manner?

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| **Measuring your progress** |

Measuring progress is essential to assessing performance, effectively utilizing resources, and, ultimately, ensuring success. As you establish your Homelessness Plan goals (responding to Question #4 in the template) and look towards implementation, consider the following questions to help you formulate metrics, assess your data and evaluation capacity, and leverage existing resources.

* For each goal and action, what data sources are available to measure performance? If no data sources are currently available, what systems can be put in place to collect accurate and timely data?
* What metrics will be most informative as you assess your progress?
* How can you measure overarching progress, across multiple goals?
* How frequently will your report on your progress and to whom?
* Who will be responsible for data collection for each goal or action?
* Who will be responsible for data collection and analysis across the City’s Homelessness plan as a whole?
* What other measurement and evaluation processes are already in existence in your City? Can you tap into resources and expertise already being utilized elsewhere in the City?
* What local partners can you engage to assist with data collection, analysis, and evaluation? Are there local universities or businesses with data analysis capacity that can contribute their expertise?
* How will you use data collected to enhance your Homelessness Plan and related actions?

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| **Collaborating with Regional Partners** |

When cities partner with one another, work with regional organizations and coalitions, and join with the County in combatting homelessness, we can maximize the impact of our efforts. As you respond to Question #6 in the template, please see the contact information for CES leads, LAHSA, Councils of Government, the County Homeless Initiative team, and other cities’ planning project directors in your grantee binder.